

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A process to obtain fleshed pelt using saline water, said process comprising the steps of:

i) treating raw hides/skins with saline water having sodium chloride concentration in the range of 11000 to 30000 ppm by not less than 300% w/v, in the presence of salt by not less than 0.04%w/v, either individually or in any combination thereof, for a period in the range of 10 hrs to 14 hours to obtain soaked hides/skins,

ii) treating soaked hides/skins with alkali metal by not less than 2% w/w in combination with saline water by not more than 200% w/v for a period in the range of 6 hours to 48 hours, and

iii) fleshing the treated hides/skins of step (ii) to obtain the fleshed pelt.

2. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the sodium chloride concentration of saline water is in the range of 11000 to 30000 ppm.

3. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the salt is selected from ~~a group comprising of~~ the group consisting of alkali metal and an alkali earth metal.

4. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the salt of alkali metals used is selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, sodium bicarbonate either individually or in combinations thereof.

5. (Currently Amended) A process, as claimed in claim[[s]] 1 ~~and~~ 2, wherein the salt of alkali earth metals is selected from calcium hydroxide, magnesium hydroxide either

individually or in combinations.

6. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the skin/hides obtained from animals.

7. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 6, wherein the animals are selected from ~~a group comprising~~ the group consisting of a cow, goat, sheep and buffalo.

8. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the fleshed pelt is used for preparing the finished leather.